



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

September, 1912, a few weeks before this imbecile deed was committed, the International Freethought inaugurated a memorial inscription at the farm of Praz-Perey on the banks of Lake Geneva, at the house in which Clémence Royer's thought freed itself from darkness and prejudices and opened to the light of scientific truth. The ceremony at Praz-Perey was exceedingly simple, indeed such as Clémence Royer herself would have wished it. Unfortunately, when I read the speeches delivered on that day, I had the impression that the speakers did not exactly realize the true extent, value and import of the work that the immortal woman leaves behind her. As to ourselves, having spent six whole years in diffusing and completing the doctrine, we can advance it as the remedy which our humanity is waiting and hoping for in order to be cured once for all of the religious mania and of that discomforting skepticism which results from the loss of one's dearest creeds and beliefs!

ARISTIDES PRATELLE.

PARIS, FRANCE.

DR. EDMUND MONTGOMERY: AN AFTERMATH.

The late philosopher Dr. Edmund Montgomery, who died on April 17, 1911, an obituary sketch appearing in *The Open Court* for July, 1911, left as the crystallization of his intellectual life two important volumes: *Philosophical Problems in the Light of Vital Organization* and *The Revelation of Present Experience*. The former received extended notice in *The Monist*, Vol. XIX, No. 4. The latter was reviewed editorially in the issue of July 1911. In comment on our review of this book Charles Alva Lane writes to *The Monist* expressing disagreement with the reviewer's assertion that Dr. Montgomery "bases his monism upon a mental substance as ultimate reality," and Mr. Lane's strictures are similarly urged by William M. Salter.

Mr. Lane expresses his criticism in a letter as follows:

"It seems incredible that you would charge Montgomery with theistic tendencies, even though he 'favors a teleological interpretation of nature'—the Charybdis into which he runs in his efforts to escape the Scylla of the mechanistic creeds.

"In his attempts to define the ultimate reality Montgomery has, indeed, been compelled to bring to bear all his lingual dexterity, for it requires pretty deft juggling of thought to avoid identifying

the *substance* of his 'matrix' with the 'soul-stuff' of the theosophists or the 'spiritual body' of St. Paul.

"So far as I can remember, Montgomery's closest approach to a definition of that which he characterizes as veritable and only substance is as follows: 'This steadfast producing matrix cannot possibly be of the same nature as the changeful, evanescent phenomena that transiently arise in the conscious content.' Later he writes: 'These hypothetical existents, inert matter and moving motion, cannot rationally be conceived as endowed with memory.' Thus his 'substance' is, apparently, of neither mental nor physical consistency. He classifies it as 'extra-mental' though he adds this may seem paradoxical. It is a specific element of existence brought into kinetic conditions through vital organization only. Its 'steadfastness' has probably a physical basis, and its synthetizing power amid the elements of the conscious content is analogous to the crystallizing properties of the chemical compounds. That affinities respond in the thought-world is really less marvelous than the operations of mere chemical affinity. The real marvel lay in the fact of the interaction of these disparate sets of affinities. Since organic structure results solely from vital functioning, the material of structure must be, in some wise, affinitively related to the specific energies of vitality; and mental states, whether causative of functioning or mere concomitant epiphenomena, must, in turn, reach over in some manner and get into rapport with the somatic basis of structure.

"Montgomery's 'matrix' seems to be a sort of central work-shop of all these multipotent activities. But is it, after all, of mental consistency, even though its products be mainly mental?

"To Montgomery there is, above all things, an extraconscious entity that must be reckoned with, and the character of which, save in inadequate simulacra and representative symbols, is incommensurably beyond the powers of our ken. In the human body its most marvelous development has been attained. Organic life chemically originated from it, drawing with it the potencies involved in the elaboration of sentiency, consciousness and the activities of mentality.

"Nowhere, so far as I can recall, does Montgomery use the expression 'mental substance.' Always his 'substance' is a substrate of the fleeting pageantry of mental states. It is that 'extra-conscious matrix which latently preserves past experiences,' and without which 'no conscious content whatever will arise into awareness.' This has

its seat somewhere in the recesses of the perceptible body, and by dint of its regenerative qualities 'maintains its identity and efficiency unimpaired, while producing or emitting a sustained manifestation of natural phenomena, being in fact the proximate source of this becoming of conscious appearances.' Mentality, then, is a most specific outcome of a process which is basically chemic, and liberated, Montgomery might say, from the essential potencies of the substratum of life—that extra-conscious world which keeps in most permanent and intimate rapport with life through that steadfast condition of the ectodermic structures which yields the sense of identity amid change.

"The 'creative trend' of organic substances, and indeed of all nature as manifested in the evolutionary processes, is a feature of existence which Montgomery distinctly ascribes to intrinsic efficiencies, no supernatural mental substance, or *ab extra* teleological impulse being concerned in the process."

So far Mr. Lane.

In the light of Mr. Lane's objections, we have reconsidered our description of Dr. Montgomery's monism as being based upon a "mental substance" and will say that all depends on the meaning we, and in this case also Dr. Montgomery, may attribute to the term "mental substance." In personal conversation, if we remember rightly, Dr. Montgomery did ascribe a nondescript mentality (not a fully developed mind with brain action and discursive thought but the cause of it) to the substance of his matrix; we will not however insist that he used the term "mental." Certainly he would not have identified (to use Dr. Lane's words) "the substance of his matrix with the 'soul stuff' of the theosophists or the 'spiritual body' of St. Paul." Nor did we ever understand Dr. Montgomery's philosophy in that light. However, similar terms have been used by other authorities, as for instance Clifford whose conception of "mind-stuff" is well known. We do not believe that Dr. Montgomery would have objected to a comparison of his own with Clifford's view. Dr. Montgomery's notion of substance which he called "extra-mental," was certainly not purely material, and it was to him the source of all mentality.

We have good reasons to assume that Mr. Lane is thoroughly familiar with the latest works of his friend, and so we will grant that therein the term "mental substance" is not used, but we shall see later on that Dr. Montgomery did use it in former writings

of his, although he uses it in a somewhat different sense. We do not insist on the term, but we believe that Montgomery's conception of a matrix implied the idea of a substratum which might be characterized as mental substance, for he ascribed to it the potency of mind. Our interest in Dr. Montgomery has been more of a personal nature and we feel that the public will be interested in becoming better acquainted with his character and the closing events of his life.

The problem of philosophy uppermost in Dr. Montgomery's mind was the nature and origin of the individual, a problem of which we have offered our own solution in a little book entitled *Personality*. Dr. Montgomery's solution was different. He saw the shortcomings of Virchow's cell theory and claimed that an aggregate of many cells would remain so many cell-consciousnesses but can not constitute a human personality. The cells know nothing of us and we know nothing of the cells—ergo there must be a central monad. Here Dr. Montgomery's views remind us of Goethe's soul monad which the great German poet assumes to constitute man's entelechy.¹

We will let Dr. Montgomery explain himself in extracts which we quote from his essays published in the prime of his life. He says:²

"To us it matters really not one jot whether our nerve-cells, if such we have, do possess inward experience, or not. Our consciousness is clearly not their consciousness. Our *I* cannot be possibly composed of any *we* of theirs. In irrelational solitude, each of them has to enjoy for ever its inner life utterly incommunicable, utterly exclusive. There can be, as we have plainly seen, no vital synthesis of their sundry intrinsic activities. No vital cell-medium is at all conceivable, in which their respective inward experiences could be combined as joint-effect. Their individual functional commotions, if at all accompanied by feeling, have to ring out separately without power of ever sensorially or inwardly influencing each other's lives in the least degree. The billions of cells of which the organic being, as a 'cell-aggregate,' is thought to be composed, are just so many elementary organisms, with just so many elementary functions, with just so many elementary unrelated sensorial experiences, if at all endowed with feeling.

"Our inner life, on the contrary, consists of a unitary synthesis of most complex and diverse relations to other beings. It can therefore have nothing whatever to do with the many and primitive lives

¹ See the editorial article on "Goethe's Soul Conception" in *The Open Court*, XXI, p. 745.

² Quoted from an essay published in 1880 under the title "Are we Cell-Aggregates?"

of nerve-cells. If, as we are all positively convinced, the nervous system is nevertheless subservient to our sensorial and other mental experience, it certainly cannot be so by dint of the inner lives or sensorial experiences of its 'cells.' The only conclusion to which the cell-theory here necessarily leads is, that the specific vital commotion of nerve-cells must be construed as stimulating a unitary, hypervital substance to those activities which we call our mental life. Indeed there have to be hypostatized in vacancy the virtues of exactly such a substance, as I, in my counter-theory, have conceived the nervous system itself actually to be. The initial points of sensorial stimulation, instead of being situated at the sensory inlets, would have to be shifted to where the central 'cells' have to impart their sundry specific commotions as stimuli to a mental substance.³ Under this arrangement nerves would be 'field-telegraphs' indeed, but the 'head-quarters' and the central telegraph operators would be found nowhere within the confines of this world.

"It is only want of insight that has hitherto prevented spiritualistic reasoners from utilizing, as a solid basis of operation, these inevitable conclusions of our present biological science. I would earnestly recommend to them the serious study of biology. The science that has of late so discomposed the even tenor of their thought, is now once more at their mercy. It is open to the humiliating taunt that, setting out with the avowed aim to explain life physically and chemically, it breaks down before ever reaching physics and chemistry. With the full mystery of vitality still on its hands within its units, the 'cells,' it fails even then to put complex life together out of the vital material it assumes. It is in the power of those who believe in a hypervital substance of mind, to force upon biologists the consciousness of their shortcomings.....

"If cell-theorists persist in flattering themselves with the adequacy of their doctrine, still continuing to ignore its flagrant inconsistencies and shortcomings, even after they have been again clearly pointed out to them, it cannot alter the fact, that they are lagging far behind in their understanding of life. Perhaps, however, they may think it now worth their while to attend to the difficulties here exposed. If so, I may entertain some hope, that they will come to learn from nature the lessons forced upon me by an unprejudiced yielding to her teachings. Then we shall be delivered from the ludicrous position of having, *secundum artem*, to consider ourselves a congregation of ever so many primitive lives, and shall feel scien-

³ Here Dr. Montgomery uses the term "mental substance."

tifically restored to the full dignity of indivisible, autonomous personalities."

Mr. C. A. Lane writes to the editor concerning the use of the term "mental substance" in this passage, as follows:

"Montgomery is here demonstrating the inadequacies of the cellular hypothesis, contending that to logically complete the chain of phenomena which forms the biological problem, there must be 'hypostatized in vacancy' a mental substance 'to be found nowhere within the confines of this world,' but ready-made and supernaturally equipped with endowments for receiving and transmuting into mental forms the sundry specific commotions initiated by sensorial stimulation.

"To Montgomery there was no such mental substance existing in vacancy, for he distinctly asserts "the virtues of exactly such a substance" abide in the functions of the nervous system of the indiscernible unitary being,—a system phyletically developed by a specific chemical process most intimately interrelated with the influences of the environment. The inscrutable chemical activities and concomitant mental manifestations of this sensori-motor nerve-system are perpetuated by reason of a self-reintegrating attribute which maintains, through mnemonic properties, the sense of identity amid change, so constituting a veritable substance. But mentality is only one of its manifestations, albeit the most remarkable."

In another article entitled "The Unity of the Organic Individual," Dr. Montgomery offers his solution of the problem of the soul which in his opinion the cell theory fails to give, and we quote from it the most important argument as follows:

"It is only fair to confess that chemical activity, with its definite selective preferences and its constructive origination of specific properties, is an ubiquitous energy at present completely beyond the reach of our scientific comprehension. Neither physical nor psychical interpretations have hitherto availed to throw any light on its mysterious nature. The various attempts at a mechanical explanation, i. e., at a reduction of chemical laws to the simple laws of mass-motion, have not even succeeded in offering a plausible suggestion as a hypothetical basis to start from. And with regard to our modern hylozoism, inspired by Schopenhauer and becoming prevalent even among the scientific celebrities of our time, it can only be said that it plainly proves that we have once more exhausted the combinations all round. We are growing conscious that our earnest and most determined efforts to make motion produce sensation and

volition have proved a failure, and now we want to rest a little in the opposite, much less laborious conjecture, and allow any kind of motion to start into existence, or at least to receive its specific direction from psychical resources; sensation and volition being for the purpose quietly insinuated into the constitution of the ultimate moving particles. If, however, evolution is to be our scientific creed, we can expect the great and good things only after strength has been gradually gathered through endless toil.

"Chemical elaboration then discloses itself as the secret activity of which the vital energies are concomitant manifestations. Of whatever ultimate incident chemical composition may be the perceptible symbol, to us it is the embodiment of a synthesis accompanied by the appearance of new properties, scientifically incalculable and unaccountable.

"The properties of the molecule of water are even less intelligible to us than the properties of the living molecule. Of the former we possess only a mediate knowledge; of the latter, also some little immediate knowledge.

"From point to point we are formulating the great truth that the centralized animal organism represents only one single monadic molecule."

* * *

For several years Dr. Montgomery had led an isolated life. His own cheery words will give some idea of his outlook on life after his last fatal stroke of paralysis. On June 18, 1908, he wrote to a friend as follows:

"I am now a prisoner for good, without hope of ever becoming able to leave my home again. I am, however, quite reconciled to my fate. My general health is good, my spirits never dejected. I live alone in the large colonial house, attended only by our faithful housekeeper, now 74 years old, who has been with us more than 40 years. She is getting very feeble, but insists upon letting no one wait upon me but herself. So to save her as much work as possible, I have reduced my wants to a minimum, and live in almost complete solitude, quite satisfied, for I am inured to solitude, and time never seems too long for me....

"I never feel the want of any mere social entertainment, but there is no higher enjoyment for me than the exchange of thoughts with congenial companions. And one's inspiring ideas being understood and appreciated as they are by your poetic penetration, is rarest benison....

"Personally I am indifferent to success, though I have never doubted the final outcome. The biological discoveries and the recognition of their significance have for years kept me in a glorious state of exultation that needed no outside fuel to keep it aglow. I find it quite natural, remembering how theological opinions of the crudest type are relinquished with the greatest difficulty, that it should fare in a similar manner with scientific and philosophical views. The facts of nature are perennial, but their interpretation changes with the nature of the interpreter and the state of knowledge attained."

Dr. Montgomery's acquaintanceship embraced a wide range of the world's most noted men during the past three-quarters of a century. His friends will be sorry to learn that the eve of his life was obscured by utter loneliness, making his demise almost tragic. The most intimate American friends of Dr. Montgomery were Judge Reese, of Austin, Texas; Rev. William M. Salter, of Cambridge, Massachusetts; Charles Alva Lane, of Alliance, Ohio, and finally the new owners of Liendo Plantation, Mr. and Mrs. Harris who, luckily for the lonely patient, were kindly disposed to him and very sympathetic. Judge Lipscomb, of the Warren County Court of Texas, writes as follows:

"It is a pity that a man like him should have spent his last days among strangers not bound to him by any ties. Otherwise it was very fortunate that he fell into the hands of such worthy people who did everything they could to make him comfortable and contented. Dr. Montgomery was one of the most polished and lovable characters that ever lived in this part of our state, and his memory will long be revered by those who knew him."

Concerning his last days we will quote a personal letter from Mrs. Harris, whose kindly services were tendered the lonely philosopher during his latter days, and who was present at his death.

"Liendo Plantation, Hempstead, Texas.

"September, 20, 1911.

"Mr. C. A. Lane,

"Dear Sir:

"Your letter to Mr. L. N. Montgomery has come to hand. In the absence of all the Montgomerys I am to open the mail.

"Let me first introduce myself. I am the wife of the new owner of the old Plantation and was with Dr. Montgomery in the big house many days before his death, the 17th of April last. We all loved

him. He had been very much alone since he was stricken with the paralysis which shortened his life, having with him only the faithful old housekeeper, Cenai, who came with them from Germany nearly fifty years ago.

"In looking over his correspondence I see many letters from you to the Doctor. After receiving such great honors in his youth and middle age, for such a brilliant intellect to be drifted out almost alone was a tragedy.

"I think you were in close enough touch with him to have learned much of his home affairs. I came to him a stranger, but he seemed to like and trust me from the first. His wife not taking his name made it very unpleasant in many ways. Miss Ney, you know, was a great sculptress and, with the eccentricities of an artist, entertained many queer notions. She would be simply 'Miss Ney,' never permitting herself to be called Mrs. Montgomery after the conventional manner.

"We came from the North and fell in love with the place, so bought it at once. He had sold it to a party three years before but retained a life lease on the home. This he gladly signed over to us. He still had his one thousand dollars a year from the estate of his father who was Lord Chief Advocate of Scotland. Through meddling outsiders Dr. Montgomery's one son had for some time been estranged from the father, but after Miss Ney's death a will was made by the Doctor leaving all to his son.

"Had he been near any of you, his closer friends, he would have been better off. There was no one here for whom he cared deeply, or who could sympathetically enter into his troubles. Being an outsider, I could readily see what havoc had been wrought upon his sensitive nature and brilliant mind. The son came and looked over the papers and letters. He knows nothing at all of his relatives. For twenty years he has been a sort of Ishmael in his parental home, though no blame, I think, need attach to either the Doctor or the son for these conditions. I will send your letter to the son. He will be more than glad to get any information you can give him. All the printed matter is here. The plates from which were printed *Philosophical Problems* remain the property of Dr. Montgomery by contract. Can you not secure and preserve these? The son will do anything you wish about them.

"All told, the Doctor left about \$4000.00 in cash, but no property, and \$3000.00 of this is in trust for the old housekeeper. At her death the fund goes to the son. The books were left to Judge

Reese. He took some and left the rest to the son. Some of Miss Ney's marbles should bring something, but now some one comes in with a Bill of Sale and claims them. But the Doctor never signed it. He told me so before his last fatal spell, and he was incapable of telling an untruth.

"The son has several children. He is of generous nature, quick-tempered, but unusually bright. German, French, Spanish, and Italian are as easy to him as the mother tongue.

"The Doctor desired no formalities at his funeral. He wanted but a few to attend, and he was buried in the yard at Liendo. At his request I placed the ashes of his first-born—a boy who died at the age of eighteen months—in the coffin with him.

"My heart ached to see him so alone. I filled his coffin with honeysuckles and the wild flowers he loved best. He looked like a piece of marble in his coffin. His grave and that of his wife are both in view from my window as I write, and often I carry flowers to strew upon the sacred spot. You see he had never told us to whom we should write, or I surely would have sent you word a month before his death. But if you had seen him you would have been only grieved, for he could not speak, and in his eyes there was such pitiful desire for utterance.

"He had not written much since his last book was issued. One day he said to me 'How we wear out our bodies and ruin our brains with all this foolishness! And now,' he said, 'I am done, virtually dead, and I have accomplished nothing to help the world or myself.' I think he referred to his scientific work which had not wholly satisfied him. 'Centuries hence,' he continued, 'men will, like myself, struggle with the same problems, never coming nearer to a solution.' Don't you think a vein of this sort runs through his last book? I have marked many passages which I think refer more to every-day life than any that are to be found in his former writings.

"I hope the son will find some of the manuscripts you would like. In the meanwhile you can write me if any copies of the Doctor's magazine articles would be of benefit to you. In a short time I will send you a photograph of him. I told the son to have some taken, as several European friends of the Doctor had asked for copies.

"Hoping to hear from you again, I am

"Very respectfully yours,

L. B. Harris."

A portrait of Dr. Montgomery reproduced from a photograph was published in *The Open Court* of March, 1912. The same number contains pictures also of his wife Elisabet Ney, her studio and some of her sculpture.

P. C.

CURRENT PERIODICALS

The number of *Mind* for January, 1913, contains an article on "Rationalism and Empiricism" by George Trumbull Ladd. There is probably, he says, no other subject of controversy about which, and no other word under the cover of which, there has been more deplorable confusion and consequent inner bitterness and outward contempt than the subjects covered by the word "rationalism." "Strictly speaking, the words rationalism and rationalistic are properly used in philosophical terminology only as applicable to a certain *method* of exploring and ascertaining truth. Whenever they are used as applicable to the *content* of truth supposed to be thus ascertained, they are either misused or should be understood with caution. In violation of this caution, for example, pragmatism borrows the words, with all the opprobrium attaching to them in certain quarters, from the theological controversies of one and two generations ago, and in the name of empiricism holds up to ridicule and scorn many of the tenets of philosophy which were thought to be established on an empirical basis against the reigning dogmatism of that distant time. But rationalism is no more antithetic to empiricism than it is to idealism, or to realism, or to supernaturalism, or even to pragmatism. One might seem more justified in opposing it to scepticism; although it has almost invariably been identified with the most dangerous forms of scepticism when it has attempted to apply its method in a too unrestricted way to the problems of morals and religion. But on the one hand, one can neither theologize nor philosophize without some scepticism; and on the other hand, too much scepticism undermines all the authority and destroys all the work of reason, whether it be within the field of philosophy or theology, or even of the positive sciences."

S. Alexander, in a paper on "Collective Willing and Truth," continues the working out of a scheme of his for expounding psychological processes which depends on the principle that on the different levels of experience, perception, imagination, memory, and so on, there corresponds to each form of conation a certain form of non-mental object, or *cognitum*. The paper is to be continued,